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## Time for Truth on Cuba

IT WAS CLEAR from the start that the attempted invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in April of 1961 was a disaster for the United States. It was clear, too, that while the invasion force was made up of Cuban exiles, the U.S. government played a big part in the whole affair.

But the dimensions of the U.S. role and the responsibility for allowing the invasion to become a fiasco have been hidden behind a screen of secrecy. The Kennedy administration obviously hoped that with time the bitter memory would fade away.

It was a forlorn hope. Little by little, new pieces of the puzzle have turned up. People who had a part in the planning or operation—and there seems to be an extraordinary number of them—are beginning to talk.

Some well-known aspects of this tragic fumble have come to light, along with glaring contradictions. Contrary to Robert Kennedy's assertion that no Americans were killed in the invasion, we learned only recently that four U.S. pilots were killed over Cuba. Now it is disclosed that at least five pilots were shot down from the Alabama Air National Guard while training Cubans or flying reconnaissance.

The lack of a satisfactory explanation of what happened to deprive the Cuban exile of a victory. The shadowy role of the Central Intelligence Agency in re-

cruiting Americans and in planning and organizing the abortive expedition becomes more confusing with each new revelation.

This is a potentially explosive issue, involving the good faith of the administration and the trust of the American people. The people have known all along that they were not told the whole truth and for reasons of security have been willing to settle for less.

The question now, however, becomes one of whether even the meager details they were told were the truth. And security, after this length of time, can no longer be a solid excuse. Castro and his agents, and the Russians as well, know a great deal more about the Bay of Pigs than the American people do.

There is some excuse for toning down "loose talk" about the present intelligence operations in Cuba, as called for by Rep. George Mahon (D-Tex.). But it is not likely that spelling out the true story of the 1961 invasion would compromise current efforts to peer behind the Castro curtain.

The Senate investigation of the Bay of Pigs, proposed by Sen. Dirksen (R-Ill.), could do a great service in clearing up the contradictions and misunderstandings that have arisen, without giving away any vital secrets. Unless, of course, the vital secret is that the administration really intends to deceive the American people.